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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE GLOBAL
CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND
DEVELOPING STATES
First session
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Agenda item 3

POSITION OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA ON BASIC ELEMENTS FOR AN ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

XV. IMPLEMENTATION, AND MONITORING AND REVIEW

1. Effective implementation, monitoring and review of this action programme is essential for the sustainable development of small island developing States. The action programme is an opportunity for the international community to demonstrate its commitment to the means of implementation agreed upon under Agenda 21. 1/ In line with Principle 6 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 2/ the United Nations system and the international community shall give special priority to the needs of small island developing States since they are amongst the most environmentally vulnerable. This will require, in particular, adequate resources for implementation and actions at the national, regional and international levels.

I. NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

1. Small island developing States have begun to implement Agenda 21. In many cases national strategies have been or are being developed as a basis for action. Further progress is required to ensure that environmental considerations are given appropriate significance at central levels of decision-making and that there is full integration of environmental and developmental considerations at both micro and macro levels. Considerable emphasis has been placed on building endogenous capacity throughout the framework action programme, which will require considerable effort to implement.

2. New participatory approaches to policy-making and implementation of sustainable development programmes will be necessary at all levels. There is a special role for groups which include women, youth, senior, indigenous and local

communities as well as the private sector, labour and non-governmental organizations, as articulated in chapter 27 of Agenda 21.

II. REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

1. As has been highlighted within the action programme, pooling the limited human resources of small island developing States through regional cooperation and institutions is a necessary part of their progress towards sustainable development. Regional action based on priorities, identified in the national strategies and plans of many small island developing States, requires better coordination of effort, stronger regional organizations and improved access to financial and technical resources.

III. INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

This programme of action is part of the process of the implementation of Agenda 21, in particular, chapter 17 (g).

A. Finance

1. The implementation of this programme of action will require the provision of financial resources which are adequate, predictable, new and additional in accordance with chapter 33. This can be achieved by the international community through a number of mechanisms that would:

(a) Provide to small island developing States concessional financial and technical assistance at the levels, in real terms, necessary to support their sustainable development;

(b) Maximize the access of small island developing States to concessional financial and technical assistance taking into account, inter alia, the specific development needs as outlined in the programme of action for the sustainable development of small island developing States and the problems facing these States;

(c) Review, and revise as appropriate, the mechanisms, criteria and procedures used in allocating and providing concessional resources to small island developing States within multilateral and bilateral programmes to improve their effectiveness taking into account the special needs, the sustainable development potential and the prospects for increased small island developing States' contributions to global sustainability through increased resources;

(d) Ensure that financial and technical assistance conforms to the national and, where appropriate, regional priorities of the small island developing States;

(e) Provide support to small island developing States to enable them to achieve economic growth and sustainability.

B. Trade

1. The economies of small island developing States are extremely dependent on international trade and very often on international trade in, and market access for, a single commodity. The need for a supportive international economic and trading climate conducive to sustained economic growth and development is therefore critical. Trade liberalization, with a view to enhancing the access to markets for the exports of small island developing States is particularly important.

2. The international community should also aim at finding ways and means of achieving a better functioning and enhancing the transparency of commodity markets; of providing greater diversification of the commodity sector in small island developing States within a macroeconomic framework that takes into account a country's economic structure, resource endowments and market opportunities; and of providing better management of national resources that takes into consideration the necessity of sustainable development. In this connection, the fulfilment of measures designed under paragraph 2.16 of Agenda 21 are relevant to the sustainable development of small island developing States.

3. In this context, a study should be undertaken on the effects of trade liberalization and globalization on the sustainable development of small island developing States and should include recommendations for ameliorating the negative impacts.

C. Transfer of environmentally sound technologies for cooperation and capacity-building

1. The transfer of environmentally sound technologies, cooperation and capacity-building is a crucial process for achieving sustainable development in the small island developing States. In particular, the promotion of access to environmentally sound technologies is a key requirement for enhancing the endogenous capacity of small island developing States.

2. In the context of small island developing States, there is a particular need to focus on the dissemination of information regarding available technology; improving the endogenous capacity of small island developing States to absorb, manage and utilize environmentally sound technologies through, inter alia, education and training; and promoting, facilitating and financing access to and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, including state-of-the-art technology, as well as corresponding know-how on concessional and preferential terms.

3. The fulfilment by the developed countries and the international organizations of measures described in paragraph 34.18 of Agenda 21 is also of critical importance to the small island developing States.

1. Information

(i) Support the establishment of collaborative networks of subregional and regional research and information systems, in particular mechanisms to facilitate the access of small island developing States to information;

(ii) Focus on disseminating information on environmental emergencies that may result from poor or inappropriate application of technologies and early warning information aimed at preventing natural and environmental disasters;

(iii) The focal point for small island developing States within the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development could, in coordination with relevant United Nations agencies, including regional scientific and technical bodies, serve as a central data bank for information exchange on available technologies, modalities for their acquisition, and technical cooperation programmes relating to the special needs of small island developing States.

2. Capacity-building

(i) The national capacities of the small island developing States to assess, manage, absorb and utilize new technologies should be strengthened. In this context, the existing administrative infrastructure would have to be strengthened so as to train personnel at all levels and educate the end-users of these technologies;

(ii) Small island developing States should cooperate among themselves and with other developing countries that are in a position to do so with a view to developing and improving environmentally sound technologies. The international community should extend its full support to initiatives aimed at promoting technology cooperation and capacity-building among small island developing States and other developing countries.

3. Finance

(i) Bilateral and multilateral donors should increase their financial support at the national, regional and international level for activities that are designed to promote and facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and capacity-building to small island developing States.

D. Environmental legislation and training

1. International environmental law is an increasingly complex subject which requires careful analysis with respect to its applicability to various bodies of national law. Regional and international programmes to enhance the capacity of small island developing States to develop and implement appropriate national

environmental legislation are very important. This should include support for training in all aspects of environmental law, including, where applicable, customary law.

E. Institutional arrangements

1. A specific international mechanism will be necessary to direct the substantial resources required to effectively address the specific needs and concerns of small island developing States.

2. The focal point for the Global Conference which has been established within the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations should be strengthened, with specialized expertise and resources to research and respond to the specialized sustainable developments needs of small island developing States, and should be given overall responsibility to monitor United Nations implementation of agreements and commitments emanating from the aforementioned Conference.

3. During each substantive session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the report of the focal point to the Commission on international follow-up to the recommendations emanating from the Global Conference should address those items of the programme of action that are pertinent to the Commission's current agenda.

4. The relevant programmes being carried out by the United Nations system and the relevant regional and multinational organizations in the regions and individual countries should be recognized, consolidated and expanded or rationalized, as appropriate. Initiatives to promote economies of scale through integration should also be encouraged. Where applicable, the common objectives of members of regional integration arrangements should be taken into account.

5. Focal points for small island developing States should be established within United Nations specialized agencies having expertise and mandates in particular areas of the programme of action.

F. Vulnerability index

1. Small island developing States, together with national, regional and international organizations and research centres, should continue work on the development of vulnerability indices and other indicators that reflect the status of small island developing States and integrate ecological fragility and economic vulnerability.

2. In this respect, the relevant international organizations could utilize their capacity to support the development of the index.

IV. MONITORING AND REVIEW

1. In addition to the direct monitoring and review of results by the development assistance agencies and countries concerned, there will be regular, ongoing monitoring and review at the global level by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations. Within the Department, a unit within the focal point, with a monitoring and review capacity, should be established to gather financial and programmable information on activities supporting the sustainable development of small island developing States. This unit will monitor and review the implementation of the outcomes of the Global Conference and of Agenda 21.

2. Within five years, a second Global Conference, convened in accordance with chapter 17 (g) of Agenda 21, will undertake a comprehensive review of the degree of success in enhancing the sustainable development of small island developing States, with recommendations, where necessary, for amending the programme of action and providing means of implementing it.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8), annex II.

2/ Ibid., annex I, p. 4.